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ABSTRACT

A companion to The Mamook Book (ED 214 720), the student activity book teaches about Plains Indian cultures (in particular about Lakota life) through a series of activities such as: coloring panoramas of a Plains tipi encampment and a contemporary reservation; depicting historical and contemporary children; making a mobile; constructing a tipi and a war shield; reading a legend; learning the uses of the buffalo; and preparing recipes of traditional foods. (ERB)

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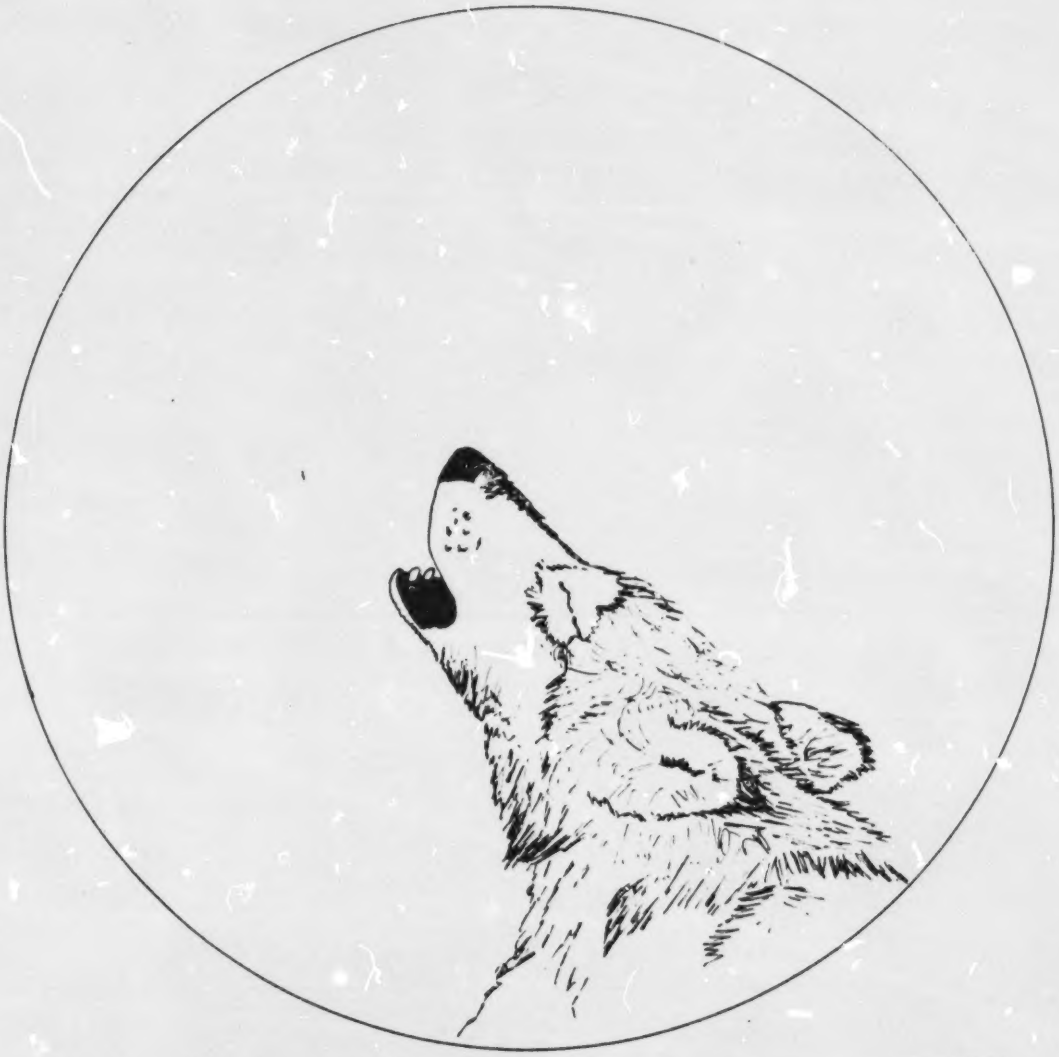
O Wakaga



Cover: The buffalo within the circle symbolizes the circle of life. His springtime birth was a new beginning, continuing a cycle as old as time. The buffalo's life connects to Indian people of the Plains in material and spiritual ways. The buffalo gave its life for the people to have food, clothing, housing, tools and many more life-sustaining items. And long ago, the White Buffalo Calf Woman brought the people the sacred pipe and many sacred teachings to build the spirit within each person.

Inside front cover: The wolf within the circle of life balances the life cycle of the buffalo. The wolf was a predator of the buffalo, and controlled their numbers by taking the old and the sick. He only took a few of the young calves, because just a few hours after birth, a baby buffalo could travel as fast as the mother. This made the buffalo herd faster, healthier and stronger. In turn, it made it harder for the wolf to feed on them, which made the wolf stronger, too. Mother Nature has a purpose for everything within the circle of life.

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O Wakaga

Activities for learning about the Plains Indians

Developed & Written by **Linda Skinner Brewer**
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Edited by **William Brescia**

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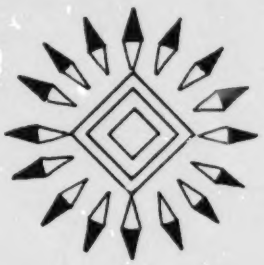
Indian Education Act.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to all our grandmothers and grandfathers. They learn from life and lovingly give their hearts and minds to our greatest gift, the children.

This book could not have been written without the love of one Minniconjou grandmother who kept the ways of the people in her heart and who taught her grandchildren to honor them . . . and the grandson, who listened well, and remembered. The circle continues . . .



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A very special thank you to all who surround my life with love and beauty . . . the people, the children, my family, my husband, and my little son who is an inspiration of life itself, coming to this world from the other one during the writing.

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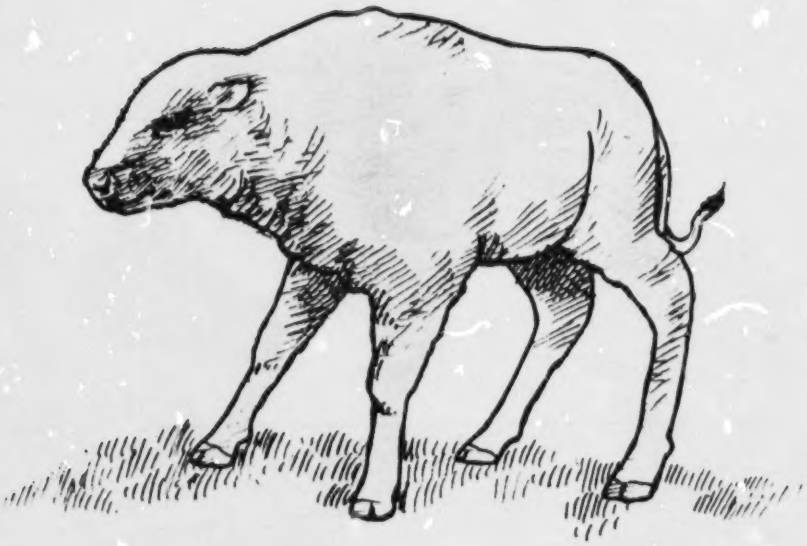

Hi! In English my name is **Buffalo Calf.** My name changes in every language. The Lakota call me **Tatanka Cincala** (Tȟ tȯ́n ka Chēēn cha la). The native people of North America have special feelings for me. I was the helper of the Lakota and other Indian tribes. I will be telling you about how we lived together within the circle of life.

Because buffalo have always served the people, I want to serve you! I will be your guide and helper through this book and show you how the people of the Plains used to live long ago, and how they live today. So, **un skata** (o͞on shka tä)! That means, "Let's play!" That's how Lakota children greeted each other. They didn't say "hello," because they already knew they belonged to each other, and to the same circle.

We are all relatives.
We always have been.
We always will be.

I will show you how the people live. You will learn what **O Wakaga** (Ō Wä ka gä) means. You might want to say it when you finish making the activities in this book. It means, "I made it!"

The people always had reasons for doing things. I'm taking you with me so you can learn about and understand the native people of the Great Plains. All buffalo calves are different. That is because we all have different experiences, and because Mother Nature never makes two things exactly alike. The story I have to tell you is just the story of one little buffalo calf . . . but it is my story . . . because this is what my grandmother, **Unci** (o͞on chḗē), told me . . . I will try to speak so that you feel all that my heart holds as we travel together.

Remember that what you learn here with me will be very different than some of the stereotyped movies or television shows you have seen. It is important to know that there are many different kinds of Indian people. Different tribes have different languages, different oral traditions, different clothing, and different ways of living and believing.

The Plains tribes lived throughout the middle part of the United States and Canada, and traveled much of the time. This area was very large, extending from the Rocky Mountains east to the Mississippi Valley and from Texas north into Canada.

Even though these tribes all lived on the plains, there are many differences among them. Several types of dwellings were used: the tipi, earth lodge, mat house, pit house and sod house. There were many other differences, too. Some tribes farmed, others did not. They had a variety of foods available to them. Their lifestyles depended on their environment. These differences among people are what makes each person special. Indian people are proud of their individuality. They recognize that each person has his or her own beliefs, and they respect all people in that way. Our differences make it possible to share what we have and who we are with others.

In this book we are going to concentrate on the High Plains Lakota people. They are sometimes called "Sioux," but the true name is **Lakota** (là kŏ tà). That means "friendly alliance." When the people refer to themselves, they say **oyate** (ō yà tāy), meaning "the people."

If you lived on the plains, you would see flat, open grassy areas, rolling hills and mountains, lakes and rivers. But weather conditions were very harsh. The Plains people survived tornadoes, hail, thunderstorms, blizzards and intense heat. They became strong in this environment of powerful beauty.

The Plains Indians depended on Mother Nature for everything. And everything necessary for the people to live a good life was there. They needed homes, clothing, utensils for cooking, hunting weapons, and methods of transportation just like we do today.

The people of the plains had many things to eat. The animal life on the prairie included buffalo, deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, rabbits, squirrels and birds. The plant life included wild rice, wild turnips, **timpsila** (tēēmp sēē la), choke cherries, plums, currants, raspberries, sand cherries and buffalo berries.

The Indians of the Plains lived in tipis that they made from our buffalo hides. That is because they are a people who lived over a large area, and needed homes that were lightweight and easy to move.

Maybe you can feel what it was like to be a Lakota long ago. It is much like living in a house today with several rooms. You know that the food is in a certain place, so you go there to get it. So, the Lakota felt at home in all the places of Mother Earth, and watched her very closely, and learned which were the best places to be at different times of the year. The life of the Lakota was well-planned, as you will see. As you travel along with me in **O Wakaga** to visit these people of the Plains, you will learn how they used all of Mother Nature's gifts with great wisdom.

Here is another kind of map used by the Lakota people. It is a symbolic map of the world they lived in. Look carefully at the buffalo skull. This map shows the arrangement of camp assignment on the Western Horn of the seven bands of the Lakota Nation.

If you were a Lakota person living long ago, you might belong to one of the bands of the Western Division Teton, called Lakota (see the buffalo horn on your left).

Your relatives to the east of the center of the skull are called Dakota & Nakota.

If you lived on the western horn, you might know it today as the "Horn of Plenty," because it is shaped like a cornucopia. It was the place where the largest number of buffalo grazed. The northern herd came out in Big Horn country into the plains along the Platte River. They walked out of the horn into the vast flat land called **Nablaska** (nä blăs ka), into the northern part of Colorado.

In the days long ago, a person who lived on the horn near the Black Hills, **Paha Sapa** (pä hă să pä), might be talking to someone about this map. Where would he be going to "hunt on the head?" Where would he be if he "camped on the bridge?" What state would he arrive in today if he traveled "to the nose?"

The map on page 4 shows you the names of some of the Plains tribes. Each tribe has different customs or ways of doing things. Each tribe speaks a different language. And, there are even differences within tribes such as speaking different dialects.

Remember, we talked about how much Plains people traveled? They met many other people from all over North America. Because they spoke different languages, they had to communicate in other ways. One "language" that was understood by many people of those times was sign language.

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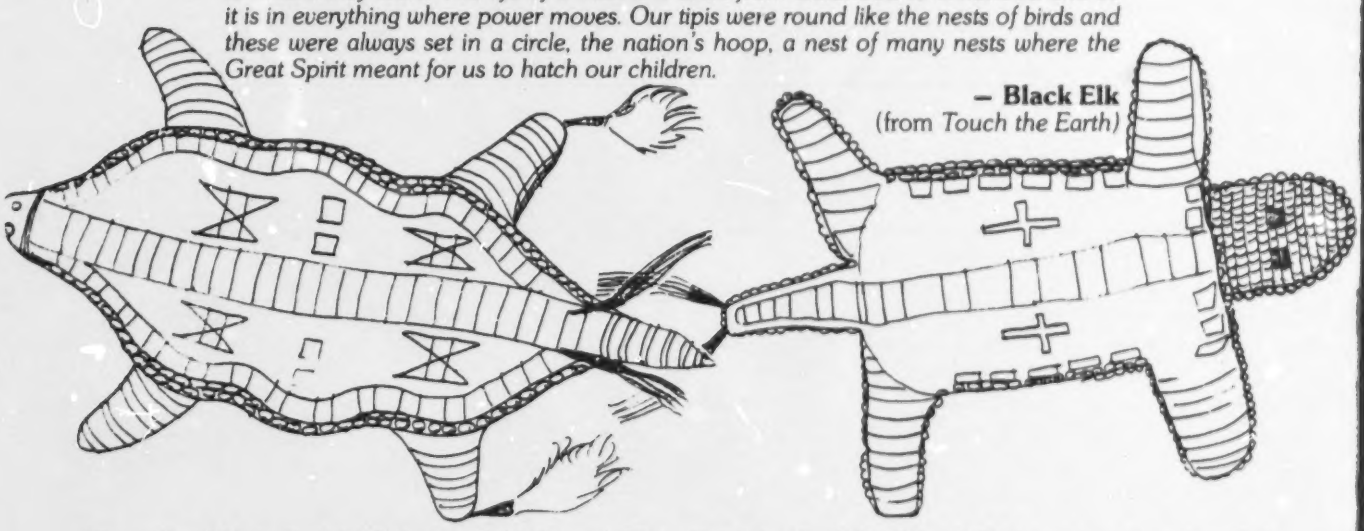
THE SACRED CIRCLE

YOU HAVE NOTICED THAT EVERYTHING AN INDIAN DOES IS IN A CIRCLE, and that is because the Power of the World always works in circles, and everything tries to be round. In the old days when we were a strong and happy people, all our power came to us from the sacred hoop of the nation and so long as the hoop was unbroken the people flourished. The flowering tree was the living center of the hoop, and the circle of the four quarters nourished it. The east gave peace and light, the south gave warmth, the west gave rain, and the north with its cold and mighty wind gave strength and endurance. This knowledge came to us from the outer world with our religion. Everything the Power of the World does is done in a circle. The Sky is round and I have heard that the earth is round like a ball and so are all the stars. The Wind, in its greatest power, whirls. Birds make their nests in circles, for theirs is the same religion as ours. The sun comes forth and goes down again in a circle. The moon does the same, and both are round.

Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing, and always come back again to where they were. The life of a man is a circle from childhood to childhood and so it is in everything where power moves. Our tipis were round like the nests of birds and these were always set in a circle, the nation's hoop, a nest of many nests where the Great Spirit meant for us to hatch our children.

– Black Elk
(from *Touch the Earth*)



The cycle of life is what the Lakota call the Sacred Circle. To understand this Sacred Circle, one must understand that all things live within a circle.

If you look at the rings in a tree, you see circles within circles. These are rings of growth. You see a center, too. Just as all things are part of a circle, all things have a center, a point of balance.

Indian people are reminded of the circle of life in many ways. They honor this circle by the way they choose to live. The tipi is round, like Nature. The drum is round. The dances are done in a circle. It is this way with the life of a person, too.

Life began for the Lakota long before the birth of a child. Young girls were taught how to care for children in the grandmother's lodge. Preparations for a child began before the child was born. Prayers and ceremonies were performed for the baby's life. In the months before birth, there was total attention to the child. The baby was exposed to all the sounds of the camp. Songs were sung. The parents and grandparents and other relatives gave the baby many meaningful gifts. During pregnancy, the mother or grandmother made two quilled or beaded objects, a sand lizard and a turtle. Both animals were held in reverence because the people had observed how long they lived, and how difficult they were to kill. After the baby was born, his umbilical cord was wrapped in tobacco and placed inside the turtle. The turtle meant strength and, because it moved so slowly, had the ability to see everything it passed in a spiritual way. The lizard, who could change colors and dart and run quickly, was a decoy to attract any evil forces, thus ensuring a long life for the child. One of the father's sisters made a cradleboard as a symbol of the love for the child.

Childhood among Indian people is considered sacred. It is felt that babies should be treated as holy persons, because they have just come from the "other side," the spirit world. Children were cared for fondly and given the utmost attention. Mothers nursed and cuddled their babies, who thrived on this perfect diet and gentle closeness. Children were taught many values at an early age: to serve the people, to respect elders, to share, to be honest, to have pride, to achieve, to honor peace and wisdom, and to develop spiritual awareness. Young children were given responsibility, too. They were expected to take care of their utensils, clothing and tools. Children knew they were "born to serve the people," and always knew that their behavior reflected on their people.

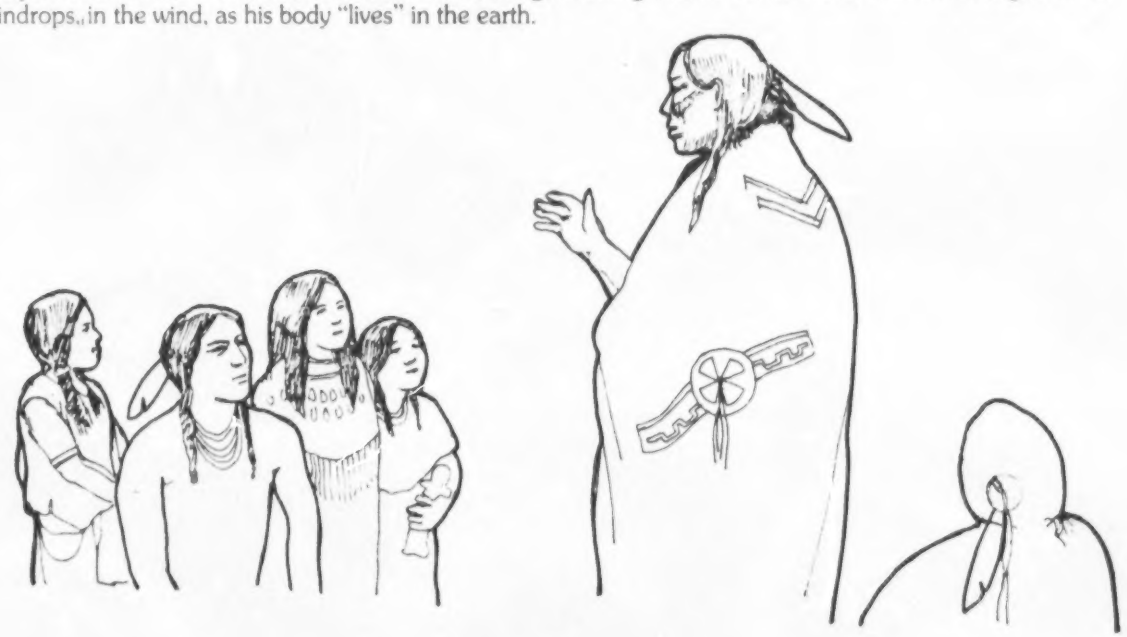
Youth was an educational time for Indian children. It was the time when they learned specific skills and abilities that would help them to survive in the world. The games and activities were purposeful. Young boys were compelled to take long runs, to learn skill, endurance and bravery. They also learned how to provide for their families by going on small hunting parties for birds, turtles and rabbits, learning how to use a bow and arrow, how to track game, and how to respect nature by only hunting for what was needed. The young boys were responsible for the horses.

Young girls had many duties too. They were taught by the mother and grandmothers. They learned about gathering, using and preserving the wild berries and other fruits. They learned about plants and herbs. They learned to tan hides, to prepare food, to make beautiful things from quills and beads. They also played games of skill. The girls were carefully prepared for motherhood from a young age, so that all the children would be raised well for all the people.

Adulthood began at an early age for Indian people. The responsibilities of life were great. During these years, a person had to understand his purpose in life and the beliefs and ways of the people.

Elders of the tribe were the teachers. Only the strong survived life on the plains, so any elder was an expert in some area of living. The elders focused their concentration on the future of the tribe, and gave counsel to the youth so that they could wisely perpetuate the ways of the people. They continually told and retold the history and oral traditions of the people so that the children would remember, and one day tell their children and their children's children.

The end of the circle . . . what some people call "death," is not feared by those who understand that all things are within the circle. In spirit, we shall always be. The end of the circle only means that the next part is beginning . . . the body that is used while on this earth, is returned to Mother Earth to continue the cycle of life, to become food for the earthworms who turn the soil and make it rich for new life . . . new beauty . . . for green grass to feed the buffalo . . . for the buffalo and plant life to feed the people. The Indian prepares for the day of departure from this part of the circle, and strives to leave it with a song, knowing that he will live forever in the sunlight, in the raindrops, in the wind, as his body "lives" in the earth.



HISTORICAL SCENE

This picture is a representation of what life on the Plains was like long ago. There is a tipi for the family to live in, including relatives like grandmothers and grandfathers, aunties and uncles, not just parents and children. Living together, they could help each other and be near each other. This is called "interdependence." While parents were busy providing food, shelter, and clothing, the grandparents and other elders of the tribe spent much time telling the children all the important things that they had learned during their lives. The children listened well, and remembered. When they grew up, they told the stories to their children and to their children's children.

Tipi (tée pée), in the Lakota language, means "where they live." Here the people are camped together in a circle. You can tell many things from looking at a tipi. For instance, look at this tipi with the shield and war weapons hung outside. This shows who the owner is.

The women have cut the buffalo meat into long strips, and are spreading it out so there are no folds in it, to keep it from rotting. The people are drying the meat over the choke cherry bushes, nature's scaffolding.

This older man is making arrowheads. He is a very respected person in the village because of his skills. He is working with some younger men to train them. You can see him teaching the young ones how to chip the flint with elk horns.

You can see women pounding and drying choke cherries. They will mix these with dried buffalo meat and tallow from the buffalo to make a common favorite food, **wasna** (wäs nä́). In English, it is called pemmican.

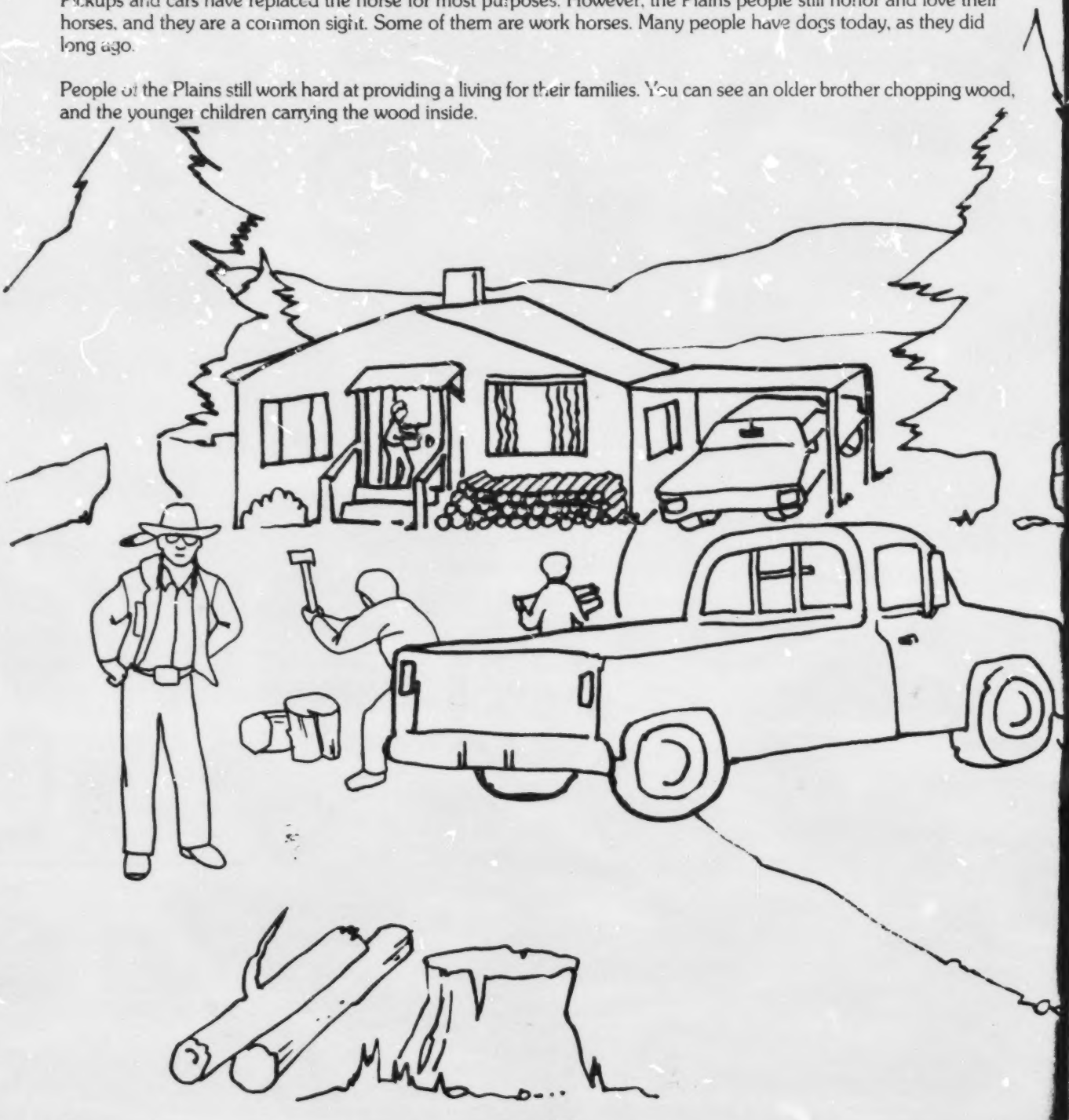
Horses are important to the people. They are used for hunting, transportation, and carrying items in travel utilizing a travois. Dogs are also used as pack animals and for hunting.

CONTEMPORARY SCENE

This picture shows what you might see in the summer on a Plains reservation today. Most people live in frame houses. A few people still keep tipis for encampments or ceremonials.

Pickups and cars have replaced the horse for most purposes. However, the Plains people still honor and love their horses, and they are a common sight. Some of them are work horses. Many people have dogs today, as they did long ago.

People of the Plains still work hard at providing a living for their families. You can see an older brother chopping wood, and the younger children carrying the wood inside.



Today, instead of hunting the buffalo and gathering timpsilas and berries for all the family's food supply, the people go to town for groceries and other supplies. This family has just returned, and everyone is working together to take the provisions inside.

The Indians of the Plains still make special preparations for "gatherings of the people." A big dinner is being cooked inside. You can see the arbor on the east side of the house. The four stumps are for the singers who sit around the drum. The other benches and stumps are for others to sit on.

HISTORICAL CHILDREN

Long ago, Lakota Indian children played in their own miniature camp apart from the adults' camp. They had little tipis, travois, dolls, weapons and tools. The girls were in charge of the camp. They learned at a very early age how to be self-sufficient. They could set up and take down a tipi, cook the food, and "read" the weather by signs of nature. In this way, they learned to be the organizers of society.

The boys would pretend to be the girls' horses. They would even have bridles and horsehair tails. The girls would run and catch them. The boys also provided food for this little camp. They went out to pick berries, hunt, carry water, and chop wood. They played games that developed skill and strength.

Remember, I told you in Lakota life, everything was always done for a reason. This kind of educational play helped children prepare for their adult lives. Children knew from an early age that they were "born to serve the people."

Young boys wore very little clothing until the ages of six or seven. They wore little breechcloths in the summer and skin clothing in the winter. The girls wore clothing at an earlier age, skin dresses and moccasins.

CONTEMPORARY CHILDREN

These are Lakota children today. They might live in the city or on the reservation. Their lives include many of the same activities that fill the lives of most young people today, such as school, church, sports, games and music. They may also be learning some of their traditional ways such as beadwork, painting, hunting, gathering herbs and plants, singing and dancing. For everyday dress, they might wear tee shirts, jeans, boots, western shirts and hats, as do many youth today.

There are many Indian gatherings today, and one of them is a powwow. Here, the young people are dressed up, ready to go for an evening of social dancing and celebration. The girl is wearing a wing dress with a shawl and beaded moccasins. She is carrying a beaded purse and is wearing an elk tooth necklace. She wears an eagle feather in her hair. The boy is wearing a fancy dance outfit. He has beaded moccasins, a bone choker, beaded medallion and a feather fan. The feathers on his outfit are hawk feathers. Wearing feathers is reserved for special times.

DRUM

The drum is the first sound. It symbolizes the circle of life, too. It is round like the universe. It is made of tightly stretched skin from the four-leggeds, the animal people. It is connected to the root people by the stick. Now it is a drum, but it cannot be heard until the circle is completed by a two-legged, a human being. When the drum is played, we hear the heartbeat of the nation pulsing. We are all a part of everything, and everything is a part of us.

> "A drum is a voice, alive and feeling as with any voice. When it speaks then we must listen and honor the message with our best and noblest selves, for it is a voice with great power and it is a gift to us from a greater being. If we do this, then our lives will be full and happy. If we do not listen but pay disrespect, then our lives will have dishonor."
>
> **– Louis Ballard**
> (from *Fine Arts*, United Tribes Educational Technical Center)

DANCE

Songs and dances were and continue to be a vital part of the life of a native person. There are dances for many occasions. Some dances are prayerful expressions of thankfulness to the Creator for our many gifts; some dances have the ceremonial purpose of asking for help from Wakan Tanka for healing, peace, victory, mourning or hunting. There are also purely social dances.

Indian dances follow traditional form. Some dance steps are simple, but others are complicated. Usually, dancers move around the circle in a clockwise direction, as the sun moves. The dancers follow the beat of the drum. Every step upon Mother Earth is as a thoughtful prayer.

Today, most dancing is the social type where people enjoy wearing their tribal dress and getting together with other Indians around the drum in song and dance.

MOBILE

Native people all over the world have always expressed reverence for the powers of the universe. The creator of all, the Great Spirit, **Wakan Tanka** (wä kȃn tȏn kä), has given many gifts. The medicine people of old sat in silent contemplation of these unexplained wonders of nature, sometimes called "the great mystery."

With this mobile art project, you can feel the importance of each wonder, and know that one, without all the others in nature, would not sustain life. It is a lesson in the balance of nature and how everything in life is interconnected.

The SUN is called **Wi** (wēē) in Lakota. It is the giver of life. The tipis and lodges were always set with the doorway to the east, so that at the first light of morning, one would be reminded to arise and begin the day with prayers of thankfulness. The sun was thanked for the warmth and light it gave to us, and for the life-giving energy and strength it gave to all the plants and animals. The Sun Dance is an honoring and thanksgiving ceremony offered to the Great Spirit, acknowledging that the sun was placed in the universe by the Great Spirit "so that the people might live." Tribal unity, peace and strength were increased.

WATER, **Mni** (mĭ nēē), is so important that without it, nothing could grow, and our life could not be. The people give thanks for the water that is as gentle as a raindrop and soft as a snowflake, yet as strong as a raging river that can wash away mountains in time. Through evaporation and condensation, water always returns. Its form is always changing — from rain to ice, snow, frost, hail, rivers, lakes, oceans and glaciers. Water also combines with fire, earth and rocks in a spiritual way in the sweat lodge. It is a way of being reborn in spirit, and another example of how everything is interconnected.

The EARTH, **Maka** (mä kȃ), is necessary for the growth of all plants and animals. She produces the roots and berries, the corn, the buffalo grass. Without earth, there could be no food. The earth also makes a place for the waters to flow and rest. Because of all these things, she is called Mother, **Ina** (ēē nȃh). Indian people know how important it is to take care of her. It is felt that the surface of the earth is her skin, the growing grasses her hair, the oil and waters her blood, the minerals below, her bones. It is no wonder that people have called American Indians the first ecologists. The land, because it is made from all our relatives, is so sacred that the people know it belongs to all, and cannot rightfully be bought and sold. Indian people want to walk in a way that will not offend Mother Earth.

MNI

WI

ROCKS are the sacred reminders of the first spirit, Stone, **Inyun** (ēē yŭng), who created everything out of himself. He gave totally of himself and his life's blood for others. When the tiny stones inside the rattle are heard, it is a reminder of this giving spirit. Rocks also serve in many ways. There are the smooth cooking stones, the fire stones that marked off places for winter camp, the stones used in the sweat lodge, and the giant stones, the mountains which give many things, including high places to go to for vision and guidance in life.

SKY is **Mahpiyato** (mäk pēé ä tō), the source of all wisdom and power. The sky is the home of the clouds, sun, moon, stars, rain, rainbow, wind, thunder, lightning and the birds. It stretches farther than the eye can see - in all directions. The blue sky surrounding the earth is favored by the spirits, and contains the air, "the breath of life." The eagle flies through the sky and takes prayers upward.

FIRE, **Peta** (pāý tä), is another sacred wonder. It cooks the food, gives warmth, and gathers the people together around it. Indians first made fire from a "firestick," rubbing wood on wood. Later they carried flint and steel. Fire is used by native people to burn cedar and sage for purification and scent. Fire also lights the tobacco in the sacred pipe.

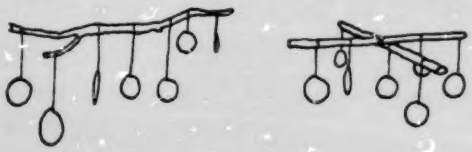
The MOON is called the night sun, **Hanhepi wi** (hăn hé pĭ wēē). She is the grandmother who controls the tides of the oceans and the cycles of women. The moon serves also to note the passage of time. The "moons," marking the passage of a year, were known by the natural events that occurred during the cycle of the moon as it continually waxed and waned. Some people feel it is best to begin new projects with a new moon and use the energy of the growing moon to aid in completion. When the moon is full, and the light from above shines down upon the whole world, it is a time that is good for ceremony.

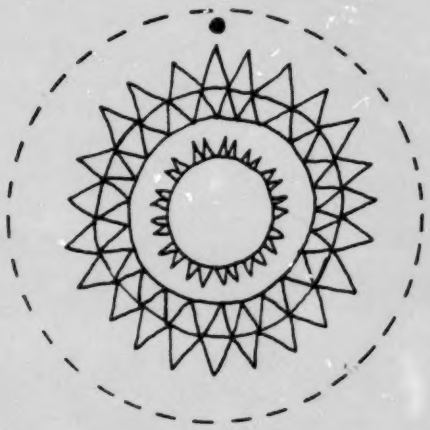
Directions for Mobile:

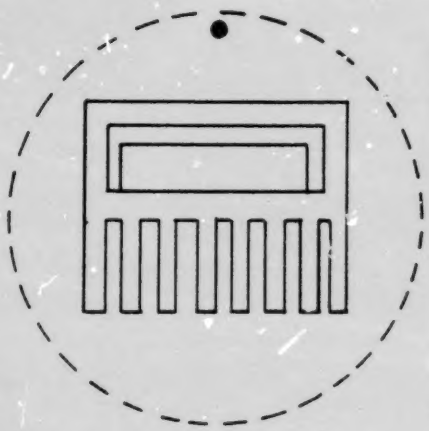
You may create your mobile any way you wish. You will need sticks and string.

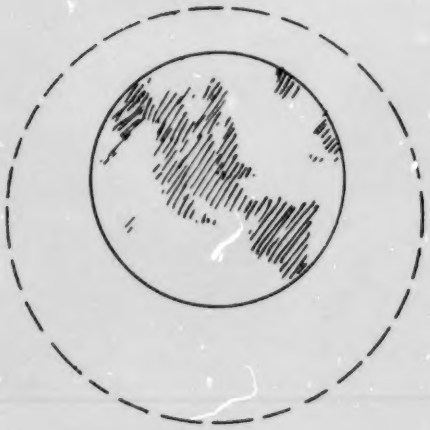
(1) Color figures and cut around dotted lines.
(2) Punch out holes with paper punch or pencil.
(3) Tie sticks together with string and add figures, being careful to balance the mobile.

Types of mobiles you can make:





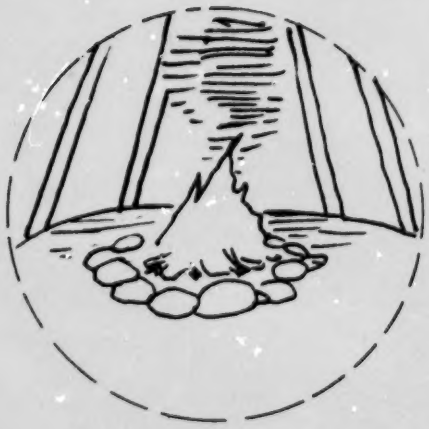




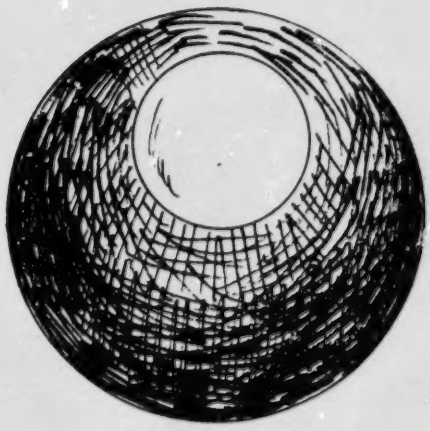
MAKA

INYUN

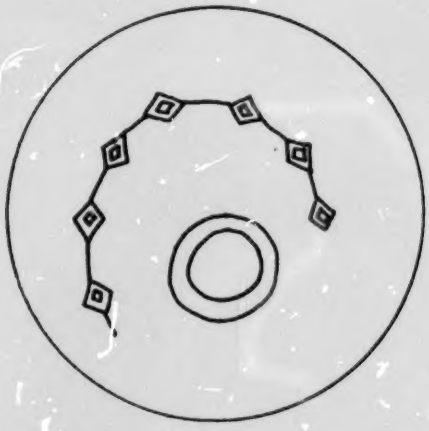
MAHPIYATO

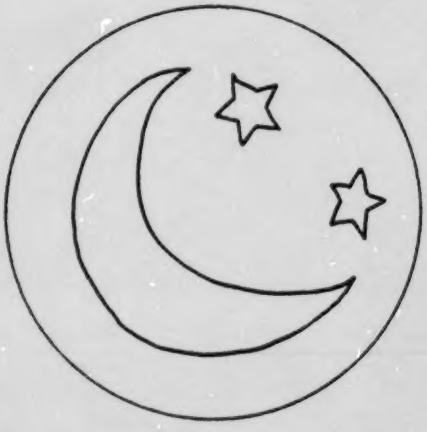


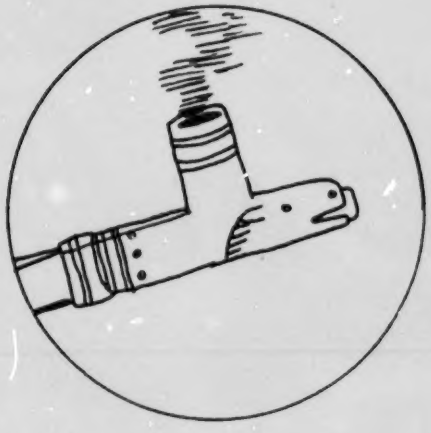
PETA

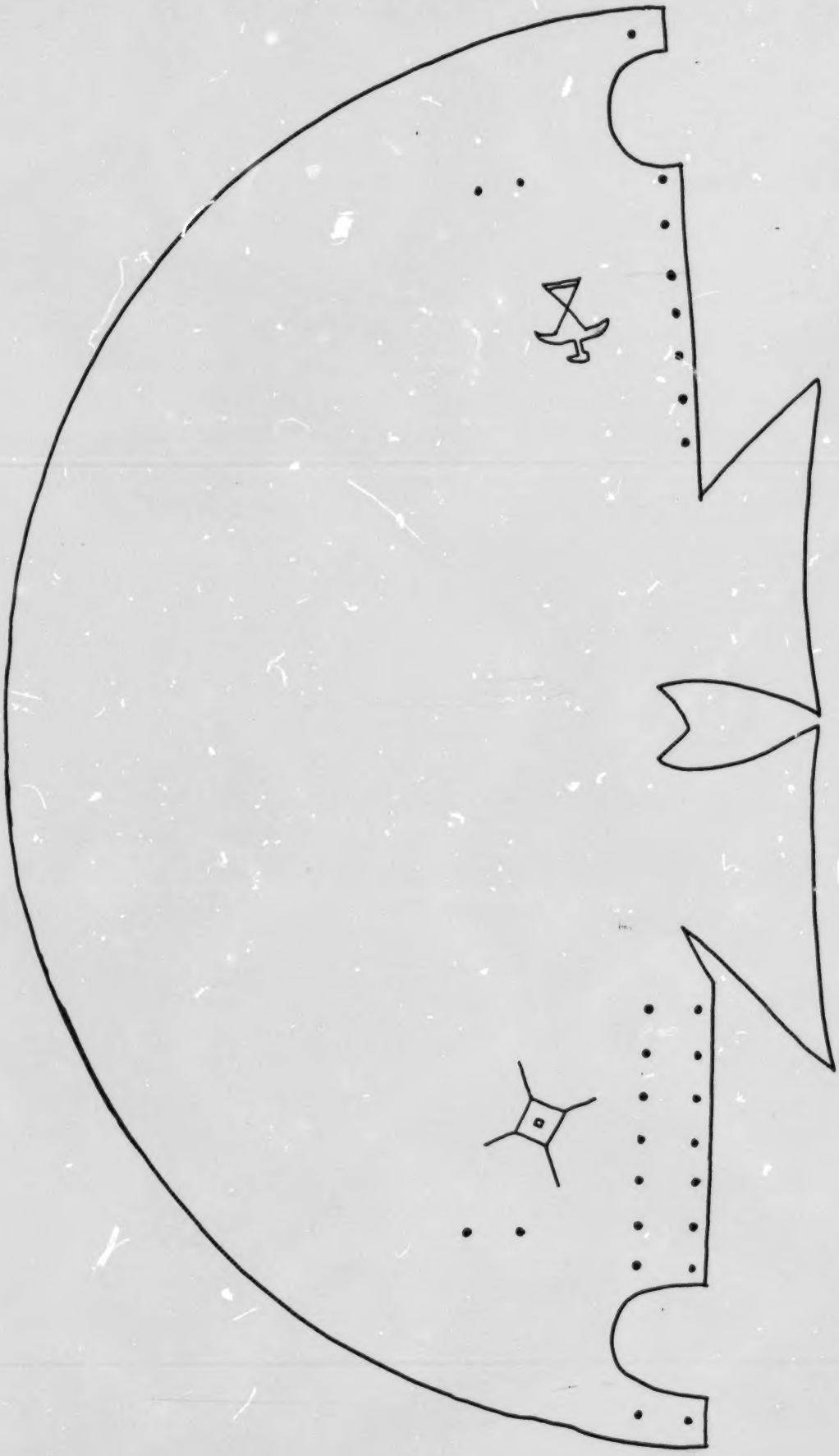


HANHEPI WI









TIPI DESIGNS AND MEANINGS

Long ago, when there were many villages of tipis, you could tell a lot about the people living inside by just looking at a tipi. There were personal designs, much like the street address today. The designs on the tipi flap told about the owner, too. There were sacred medicine signs that told something of the spiritual nature of the people inside. There were also pictographic markings like a winter count, symbolic reminders, that told the story of a person's life. For example, this small tipi would tell you several things about the people inside:

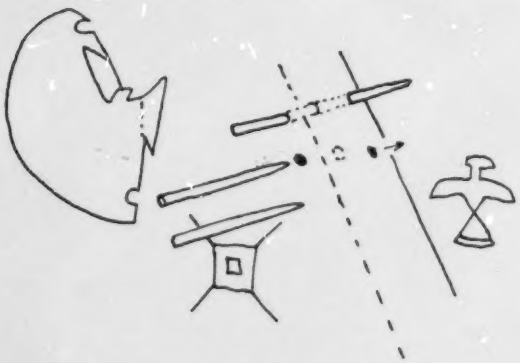
(1) The "walking feet" design means that the person is a traveler, a visiting storyteller to other tribes, a philosopher, a person who tells others about things outside their own camps.

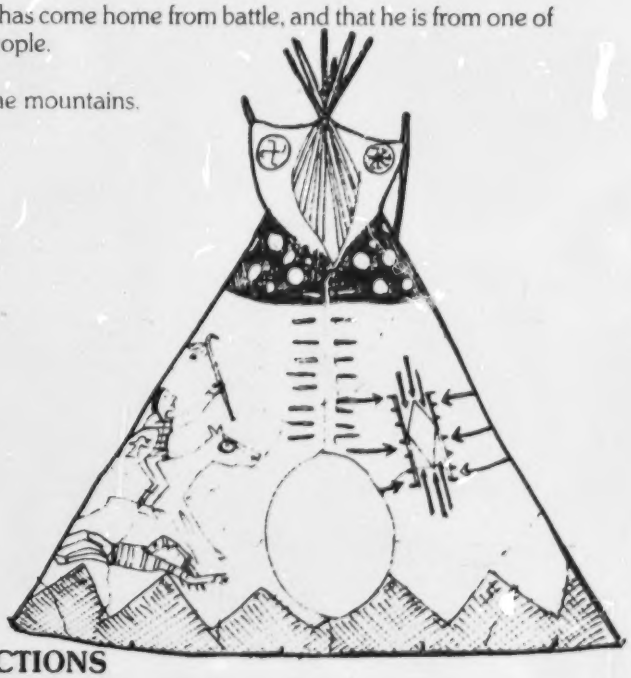
(2) The "walking sun" design is a medicine sign that shows the owner's belief in the sacredness of one full day from sunrise to sunset.

(3) The upper third of the tipi has hailstones in the dark sky meaning that someone lives inside who has studied a long time about Mother Earth.
(white hailstones=wisdom) (brown background=Mother Earth)

(4) The middle portion tells the story that this person has come home from battle, and that he is from one of the seven bands of the Western Teton Lakota people.

(5) The lower portion shows that this person loves the mountains.





TIPI DIRECTIONS

(1) Decide what you would like for others to know about yourself. Draw your personal designs on the tipi and color them.
(2) Cut out along the solid outer line.
(3) Lay the tipi down so that the designs face you. Fold the flaps back.
(4) Punch out the black holes. Use a sharp pencil or an ice pick. Make sure the holes are the same size.
(5) Get nine small toothpicks or twigs.
(6) Hold the tipi in your hand so that the side with two rows of holes is over the side with one row of holes. Make sure the first row of holes on the side is right over the row of holes on the side. Put a small piece of tape on the inside right above the hole. It will hold the tipi together while you are working on the top.
(7) Use the twigs or toothpicks to lace the tipi shut. Start with the first hole in the second row. (side) Stick one end of the twig through this hole and then through the first hole on the side and back up through the first hole in the first row on the side. Do this to all the holes in these rows.
(8) Use the last two twigs to lace open the door flaps.

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INSIDE A TIPI

Two main types of dwellings were used by the Plains tribes, the buffalo hide tipi and the earth lodge. Even the tribes who lived in the stationary earth lodges used the tipi when they traveled. The tipi was easy to move by using dog and horse travois, quick to assemble and take down, and ideal for the terrain of the Great Plains. With the addition of a brush windbreak, it was warm in the coldest of winters, and in summer, could be "air-conditioned" by rolling up the sides.

Grandmother is making moccasins. She is teaching her granddaughter how to use a moccasin stone. She is using the thick skin from the buffalo hump for the sole, and softer skin for the tops.

This comfortable backrest was one of the prized possessions. It was made with willow branches, and might have been decorated with quillwork.

A woman is sewing with sinew from the buffalo. She is holding the end of the sinew in her mouth. She has made her "needle" for sewing by making the end of the sinew soft with saliva from her mouth, and twisting it to a fine point, and allowing it to dry until it was stiff and hard.

Children were taken care of by all the people. When a child was born into the tribe, everyone knew the baby belonged to all of them. Special ceremonies were done for the well-being of the child. Here a mother has her baby in a cradleboard.

COLOR AND DESIGN SYMBOLISM

The art of the Plains Indians is among the most beautiful of the world. Pictographs, beadwork and quillwork are examples.

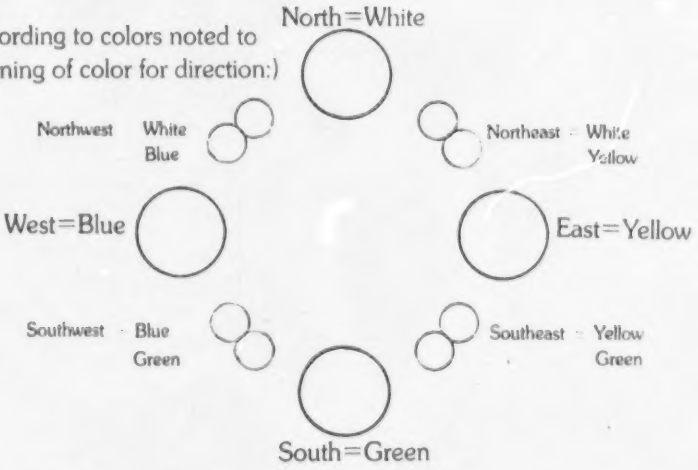
These are very old art forms. Pictographs have been found on cave walls from prehistoric times. Quillwork was the ancient forerunner of beadwork. The people have not always had glass beads. The original beads were made from the rocks that ants used to build their ant hills. Wingbones from meadowlarks were used to drill the rocks to make beads.

Plains Indians have developed a style of decorative art that is based on simple geometric designs. Most of the time, articles were decorated with designs that had special meaning to the owner. However, there was no set "language" of beadwork, so one design, such as a triangle, could represent a mountain to one person, and an arrowhead to another. The art of the Plains people is expressive, and can provide information about the owner of the object, or wearer of the beadwork.

The art can be just for decoration, or it can have deep symbolic or spiritual meaning. Color and symbols are important in most art of the plains. Many symbols tell what a person thinks is important in life. Color is symbolic, too. Color can be used to show direction or spiritual meaning. The people of the Plains lived in harmony with nature, so many of their designs and symbols are reflections of the Earth Mother. The people traditionally have used natural materials to make their dyes, as well.

COLOR LANGUAGE FOR DIRECTION:

(Color these circles according to colors noted to have a key to the meaning of color for direction:)



White=North: **WISDOM**
Great Northern winds cleanse the earth of the weak in winter. One must be wise to have survived enough winters to grow white hair.

Yellow=East: **YOUTH**
The yellow sun begins its path in the East. It is the color of children who are beginning their life's journey.

Green=South: **GROWTH**
The sun shines more in the South. Plants grow green from the sun. Buffalo travel from North to South in the spring following the new green shoots of grass.

Blue=West: **WATER**
The rain comes from the West. The deeper the shade of blue, the wetter it is, or the farther to the West it is.

SPIRITUAL COLOR LANGUAGE

North=White: represents how winter cleanses the earth of the weak; wisdom to prepare for a test, for life. It is symbolized by the wing of a white swan.

East=Red: represents where blood begins, in the East. This is because each day offers new life to a person.

South=Green: represents the sacred root life, which begins to grow first in the south.

West=Black: represents final commitment, vow, or the end of something (a day or a life).

The following medallions are some of my favorite symbols. You will be able to tell something about my innermost feelings by working on this project.

Directions:

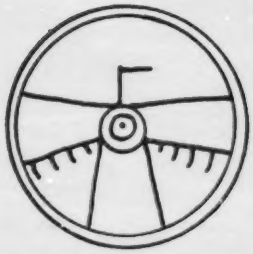
1. Trace or enlarge these circular designs on paper.
2. Paint or color the medallions, remembering the meaning of color.
3. Cut them out.
4. Paste them on something special or to a circle of cardboard.
5. Punch two holes in the top. Put a 24-inch piece of yarn through the circle and make a medallion for yourself or for a gift.

1)
This is the oldest symbol. It shows the center, the point of balance.

2)
This symbol shows the four directions, the four winds. Four is a sacred number to Indian people because so many things come in fours: the seasons, the colors of humanity, the four elements of earth, fire, water and air, and the four parts of nature, the mineral people, the plant people, the animal people, and the two-legged people.

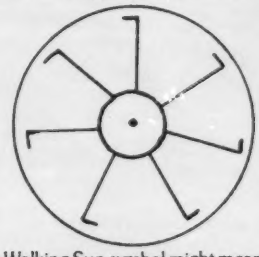
3)
This symbol of circles within circles can mean many things. It can show a person's life, with many rings of experiences and growth. It shows how all things are interrelated and dependent on everything else.

4)
This design shows the place in life when we are able to choose one path or the other.

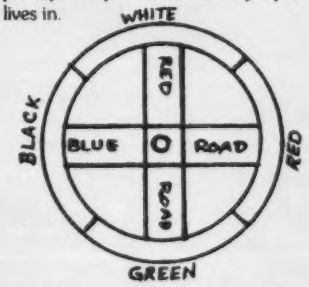


This symbol might mean that a person was asking for help from the Thunderbird, for strength, power and wisdom. A white border might mean the design is left open to gather more power, while a black border could close the circle, and hold the power forever.

This design of Walking Feet might mean that a person travels the four directions of the universe sharing thoughts and special stories with all people. If a person used white, for instance, it might mean he has traveled among people in wisdom.



This Walking Sun symbol might mean that a person wishes to remember always how important and sacred each and every day of life is . . . from sunrise to sunset. The colors chosen could show many things, perhaps the part of the country a person lives in.



This is the Sacred Hoop. The colors used here are the spiritual colors, white, red, black and green. It shows the red road, the Indian way, that we can always walk. It also shows the blue road that holds our temptations, tests, and trials. We can learn from this road. In our lives, the paths will cross many times. The important thing is to keep our hearts going along the red road. If our hearts go, then our feet will follow.

TRAIL LANGUAGE

Trail language is a complete written language using specific symbols for words or phrases. It was used by Plains tribes to record facts, and was painted on skins. Colors are used for direction.

STORY IN TRAIL LANGUAGE

KEYS

- Man
- Left
- Sunrise
- Mountain
- Horse
- Mid-day
- Man on horse
- Returned
- Afternoon

Read from arrow, clockwise

STORY IN ENGLISH

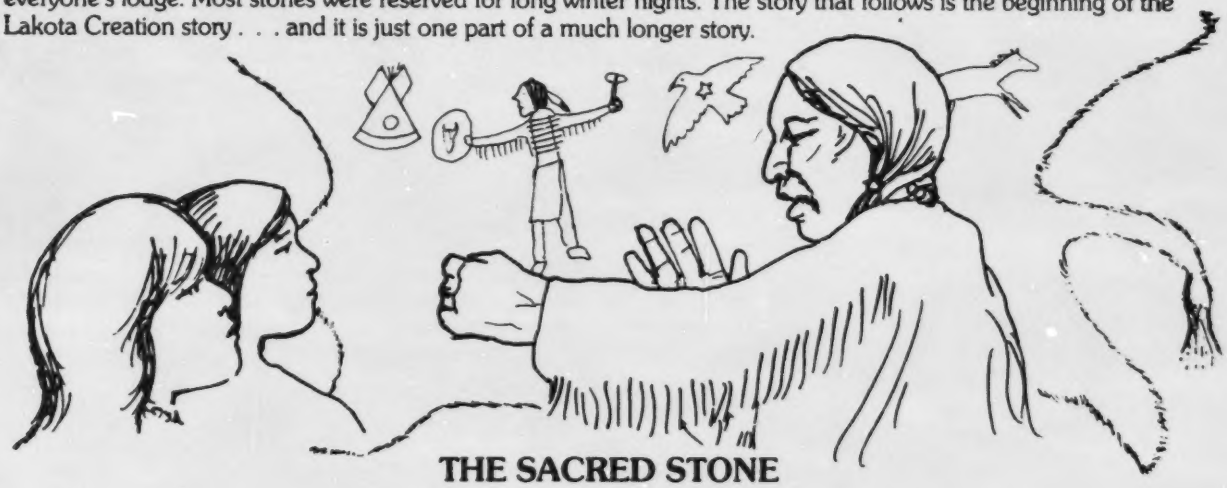
It was in the moon of green leaves (May). A man left his Tipi early one morning to look for his horse. It had gotten loose and crossed the mountains. He found it at mid-day and rode it home.

TRAIL LANGUAGE SYMBOLS

1. Man
2. Woman
3. Tipi
4. Boy
5. Girl
6. Woman and baby boy.
7. Man with empty stomach or Hunger
8. Early morning: Sun coming up.
9. Mid-morning: Sun all the way up.
10. Noon: Full overhead
11. Afternoon: Half day gone
12. Late afternoon
13. Sun setting
14. Sun down
15. Early night: Before midnight
16. Midnight
17. Late night: past midnight
18. Early morning: Before sunrise
19. Rain
20. Cloudy day

ORAL TRADITION

Stories tell about the traditions of the people. There are many different types of stories. Some stories explain how the world came to be. Other stories tell how a ceremony was born. There are stories that give lessons to be learned, and there are stories that are histories of the people. There are written and oral traditions. The Lakota winter count was written in symbol form and recorded important events. Then the people could read these, and remember the events, and tell the stories aloud. This method is called oral tradition. The storytellers were honored guests in everyone's lodge. Most stories were reserved for long winter nights. The story that follows is the beginning of the Lakota Creation story . . . and it is just one part of a much longer story.

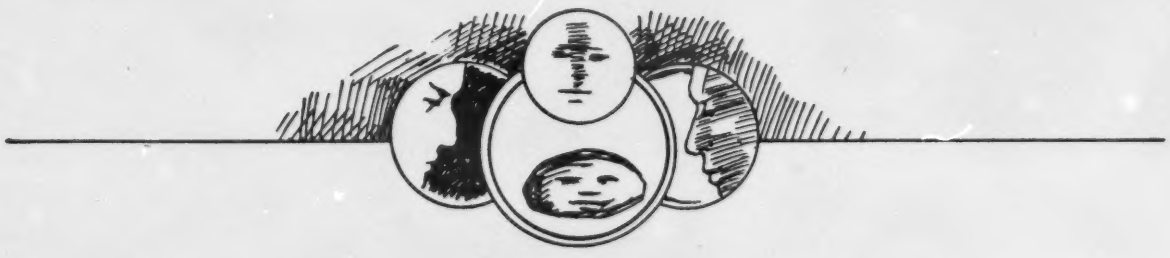


THE SACRED STONE

Long, long ago, **Ehanni** (ēē hŭ́ nēē), before there was any other thing, or any idea of time, there was **Inyan** (ēē yŭ́ng), the Stone. His spirit was **Wakan Tanka** (Wä kän Tŏ́ kä), sacred and mysterious wonder. They say that he was round and blue and soft. He lived in this place that had no light, only darkness.

Inyan was talking to the Spirit about being alone. The Spirit said, "If you are lonely, and you are all that exists, then you must give of yourself to make a relationship. So **Inyan** took a part of himself and created a disc. He named the disc **Maka** (Mä ká), Earth. He put it all around himself. As he gave of himself, his blue blood flowed, and it became Water, **Mni** (Mí nēē). The Stone, Earth and the Waters became the world. Part of the blue color became the blueness around the earth, and this great blue dome was **Mahpiyato** (Mäk pēē ä tō), the Sky above where the spirits live. After the Stone gave of himself to make the Sky, he began to care greatly about the blueness. He had given so much of himself that he became hard, like the stone is today.

There still was no light. Then the Spirit created **Anpetu** (ä pé tōō), the maiden called Dawn. Now it was morning light everywhere.



Mother Earth talked with the Spirit, and they took a part of all things, Earth, Stone, the Waters, and the Spirit. With these things, the Spirit made a shining disc. He called this disc **Wi** (Wēē), and gave it a spirit. Then he placed **Wi**, the Sun, above the sky and told him to shine on all the world, giving heat to everything, and making a shadow for each thing. Sun did this, and all the world became very hot.

Now it was so bright that Dawn couldn't even be seen. After a while, Earth, Stone, Dawn and the spirits got tired of it being bright all the time. Something different was needed, so Darkness was brought back to the world.

Darkness and Light were two warriors that kept arguing. The Spirit commanded that Darkness and Light should follow each other around the world. They did circle the earth, but they kept overtaking each other, so the Spirit put Dawn in the middle of Darkness and Light.

Now each day before the light comes, there is morning light, the Dawn. Dawn gives a signal to Darkness when it is time for the Sun. And that is why the morning light comes before the day.

LESSONS ABOUT LIVING

These stories that have been passed down through the generations contain valuable lessons. They help us think about our own actions so that we will live our lives in a good way. This oral tradition has many lessons. The lessons will change for each person as time goes by. Here are some questions for you to think about. Write in your thoughts and discuss them with someone.

(1) Why is the stone hard?

(2) Why is the stone sacred to us today?

(3) What happens when you give of yourself?

(4) What can cooperation do for you?

(5) Which unexplained wonder of Nature is the most important? Why?

PUPPET DIRECTIONS

(1) Color the puppets, thinking carefully about who they are, and the colors mentioned in the story.

(2) Cut them out on the solid outer line.

(3) Paste them on pieces of cardboard or tagboard and trim the edges.

(4) Attach sticks, dowel rods, or rulers to the backs of the puppets with strong masking tape or duct tape.

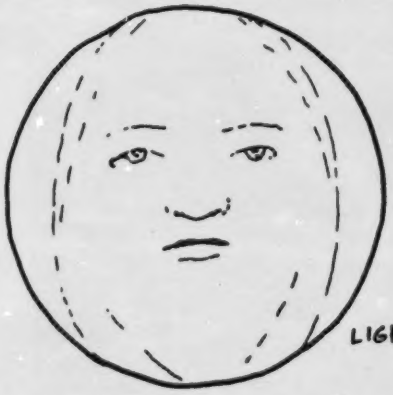
(5) Remember the story and tell it to your family and friends.

STONE

SPIRIT

DAWN

DARKNESS



LIGHT

SKY

MOTHER EARTH

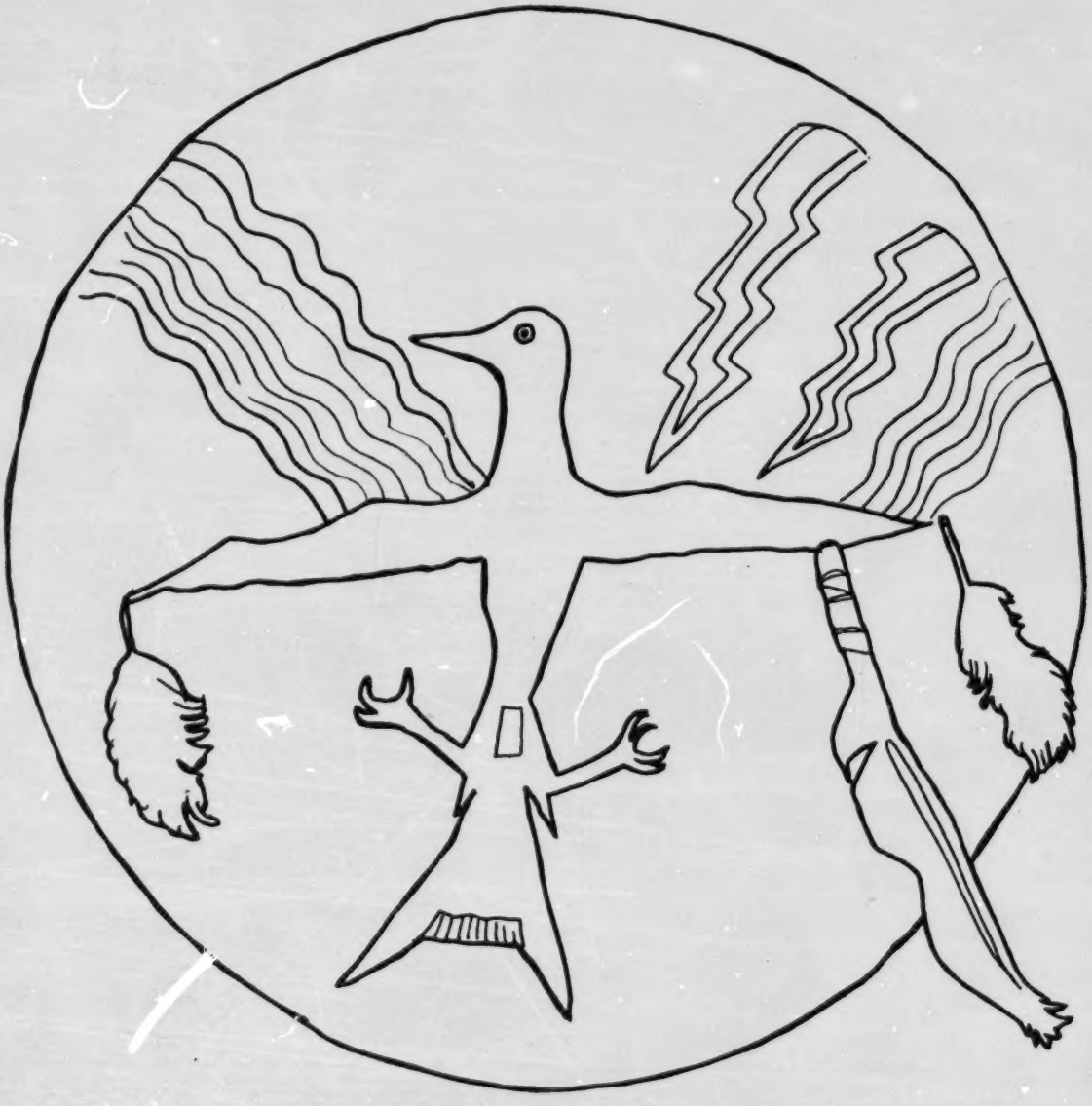
SHIELD

The shield of a Lakota man was made carefully. It had to be made well so that it would protect him in battle. It had to deflect arrows and lances and protect the owner from war clubs. It was sometimes made of the shoulder and neck hide of a strong, old buffalo bull. The hide was cut twice as large as the shield would be, and was shrunk with hot stones to increase its thickness.

During the making of the shield, prayers and songs were made so that the strongest spiritual protection would be in the shield. The war shield combined the practical aspects of physical self-protection and the reverent attitude in mental preparation of the warrior.

The designs reflected the spiritual strength and "good luck charms" of the owner. Some shields had the kingfisher or hummingbird on them. Both of these birds were known for their swiftness and ability to dart quickly. A bear or bear paw on a shield might indicate strength and fierceness. A cloud might indicate the desire to be hidden until the moment of surprise.

This small shield shows that the owner has the strength to fight, and the ability to strike swiftly, with lightning-like power.



MAKE YOUR OWN SHIELD

(1) Sit quietly and think about the things that are important to you. Think about the qualities you would most like to have.

(2) Now, as you design your own shield, make each design reveal something about you and your life.

(3) Color your designs and shield.

(4) Cut out the shield on the dotted line.

(5) Mount it on thick cardboard with glue.

(6) Loop a string, leather thong, shoe lace or yarn through the two holes in the shield and cardboard like this:

(7) Tie the string so you have a handle on the back of your shield.

(8) Decorate it further with feathers or something else from Nature.

(9) Tell someone else about your shield and what it means to you.

LAKOTA MOON CALENDAR

The Lakota did not have a Gregorian calendar based on mathematics like people use today. They observed Nature very closely, and developed their own way of marking time by the events of the natural environment. Because natural phenomena occur at different times from year to year, one rigid calendar could not have been developed. The weather factors and the condition and behavior of the animals, though, could give you much information on what would happen the following season.

The following is a calendar that might apply for a given year. The next year, several things might happen at different times, depending on weather conditions. Perhaps in examining this calendar, you will think of what happens in your life at a particular time, and make a calendar of your natural environment and how it affects you.

One example for each month has been illustrated for you. There are two sides for each circle. Perhaps you will draw your own representation for each month on the back of each circle.

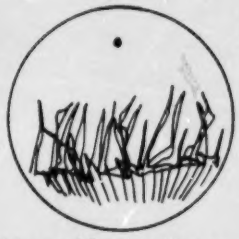
Directions:

(1) Get a wire clothes hanger and bend it into a circle.
(2) Color calendar symbols.
(3) Cut out the circles.
(4) Draw and color your own monthly symbols on the other side, according to what happens in your life during that month.
(5) Cut twelve pieces of string approximately seven inches long.
(6) Tie string in holes and attach to hanger.
(7) Hang the hanger in a good place and let your natural calendar blow in a gentle breeze.

Moon of Popping Trees
Moon of Frost in the Tipi

Moon of Dark Red Leaves
Moon when Trees Crack

Moon of Sore Eyes
(Snowblindness)
Moon of Wild Onions



Moon of Cracking Bones
for Marrow (Food was Scarce)
Moon of New Green Grass

Moon of Ponies
Shedding Hair
Moon of Green
Leaves

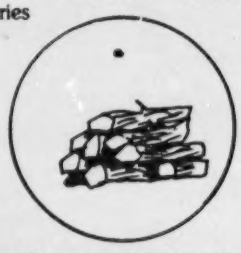
Moon of Wild Strawberries
Moon of Making Fat

Moon of Timpsila
(Wild Turnip)
Moon of Red Cherries

Moon of Getting Ready for Winter
Moon of Cherries Turning Black

Moon of Calves Growing Black Hair
Moon of Leaves Turning Brown

Moon of Wind Shaking Off the Leaves
Moon of Early Snow



Moon of Preparing Food for Winter Use
Moon of Wood Piled for Winter Use

Moon of Deer Shedding Their Horns
Moon of Popping Trees

MAY APRIL MARCH FEBRUARY JANUARY

SEPTEMBER AUGUST JULY JUNE

DECEMBER NOVEMBER OCTOBER

EAGLE

Birds are special to Indian people. It is possible to learn many things from observing them. The elders taught the children to watch the birds, so that they might "learn to fly with their spirits" as the bird flies with its wings.

An important bird to Indian people is the eagle, **wanbli** (wăn blée). They honor the sacred eagle. Eagles have many traits that native people admire. Eagles fly above all birds . . . so high that Indians consider his feathers to be rays of the sun, and the eagle to be a messenger to the Great Spirit. To use his feathers and body in ceremony brings the Great Spirit's power to earth to benefit man. That is why Indian people often pray with eagle feathers and fans, to send their best thoughts and words skyward to the spirits. Eagles have great courage, swiftness and skill. They are expert hunters, having incredible vision. From high in the sky, the eagle can see the slightest motion on the ground or in the water. They are able to see even the whiskers on a rabbit's face move in the breeze.

Eagles have fierce-looking talons, their most powerful weapon. They are needle-sharp, with a grip that cannot be broken by hand. Their bills are used to rip food into bite-size pieces.

Eagles have been known to fly all around the world. Native people feel they have great wisdom, and that they have lessons to teach about living. They have a strong family life. The adults mate for life and are fiercely devoted until death separates them. They are attentive parents to the young eaglets and keep them well-fed. They help their young learn all the skills they will need to capture food and defend their territory by survival games, such as tug-of-war over a scrap of bone or fur.

EAGLE ART PROJECT

Here is an eagle art project that you can make and hang from the ceiling.

DIRECTIONS:

1) Cut out (A) Eagle wings.

2) Color (A) Eagle wings brown.

3) Fold (A) in half with brown (topside) showing.

4) Fold (aa) the opposite direction.

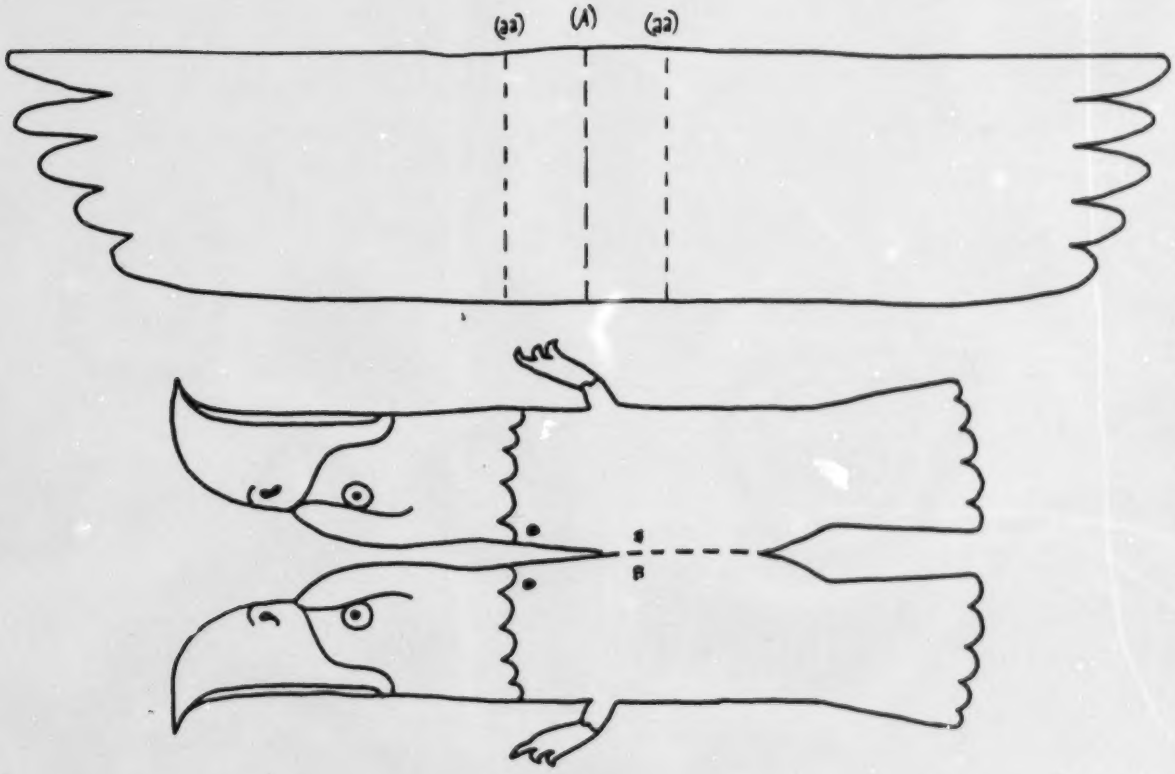
5) Color (B) Eagle head and body.
   Beak - golden yellow
   Head - white if bald eagle
   brown if golden eagle
   Eye - yellow
   Body - brown
   Talons - golden yellow
   Tail - white feathers if bald eagle
   brown feathers if golden eagle

6) Attach (A) Eagle wings over (B) Eagle head and body. Glue or staple wings to body.

7) Punch hole with pencil or hole punch where indicated.

8) Place 18" - 24" string through hole and tie.

9) Hang from your ceiling with a tack or hook . . . to remember the eagle.



HORSE

Black Elk, **Hehaka Sapa** (Hē há ka Sä pä), an Oglala Sioux, had a dream in which he heard a stallion singing this song:

> My horses, prancing they are coming
> My horses, neighing they are coming
> Prancing, they are coming.
> All over the universe they come.
> They will dance; may you behold them.
> A horse nation, they will dance,
> May you behold them.
>
> (from *The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses*)

The horse was called **Sunkawakan** (shōōn kä wä kän), sacred, mysterious dog. The name was a way of showing reverence for this four-legged relative of man. Horses were valued beyond most things. They became a symbol of wealth. Life was easier with a horse. It was possible to travel much farther in less time. That increased a hunter's ability to provide for his people. The buffalo ponies were given much care and training.

A horse gave the people increased protection. War ponies were treated with the greatest respect. The warrior and his horse had to know each other's movements instantly. A warrior often painted his horse with the same pattern and colors he used on himself. There were markings that revealed specific war achievements. Some of these are:

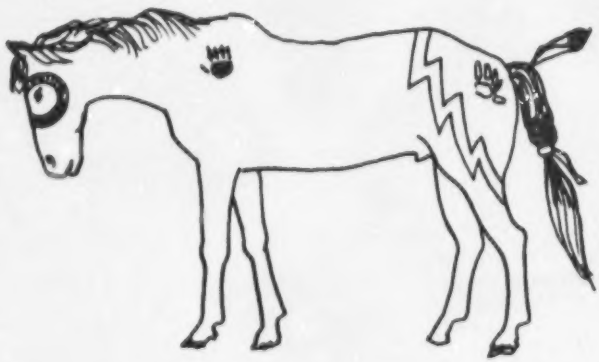
This black handprint on the horse's shoulder means defiance of death.

This red handprint on the horse's rump gives protection and strength.

A lightning zig-zag design, called a "snake," is meant to make the horse swift, and gives the ability to strike quickly like the snake. It is painted on the horse's upper back leg.

A white circle painted around the right eye (strength side) of the horse means the horse will see wisdom.

A red and black circle around the left eye (heart side) indicated the ability to see both Blood Life (red) and the Dark World or what is called "Death" (black).



The Indian pony had a large head in proportion to its body. It developed amazing speed and stamina from the rigorous life on the plains.

The Plains Indians had incredible riding abilities. They have been called the greatest horsemen ever known. The horse became an extension of the rider, responding to his slightest pressure. They were like hand and glove to each other. A horse reflects its owner, and the training he has been given. After a horse was ridden, it was immediately cared for by its owner.

BUFFALO

They say a herd of buffalo is coming:
It is here now!
Their blessing will come to us.
It is with us now!

– Black Elk
(from *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux*)

Here we are again . . . to my people, the buffalo.

The Lakota and other people of the Plains depended on us for many things. We were so plentiful that it was logical that our circles of giving became totally intertwined.

We gave them their homes (tipis), clothing, spoons, dishes, cooking vessels, meat, robes, pouches, thread, fuel, knives, shields, moccasins, rope, boats, glue and much more.

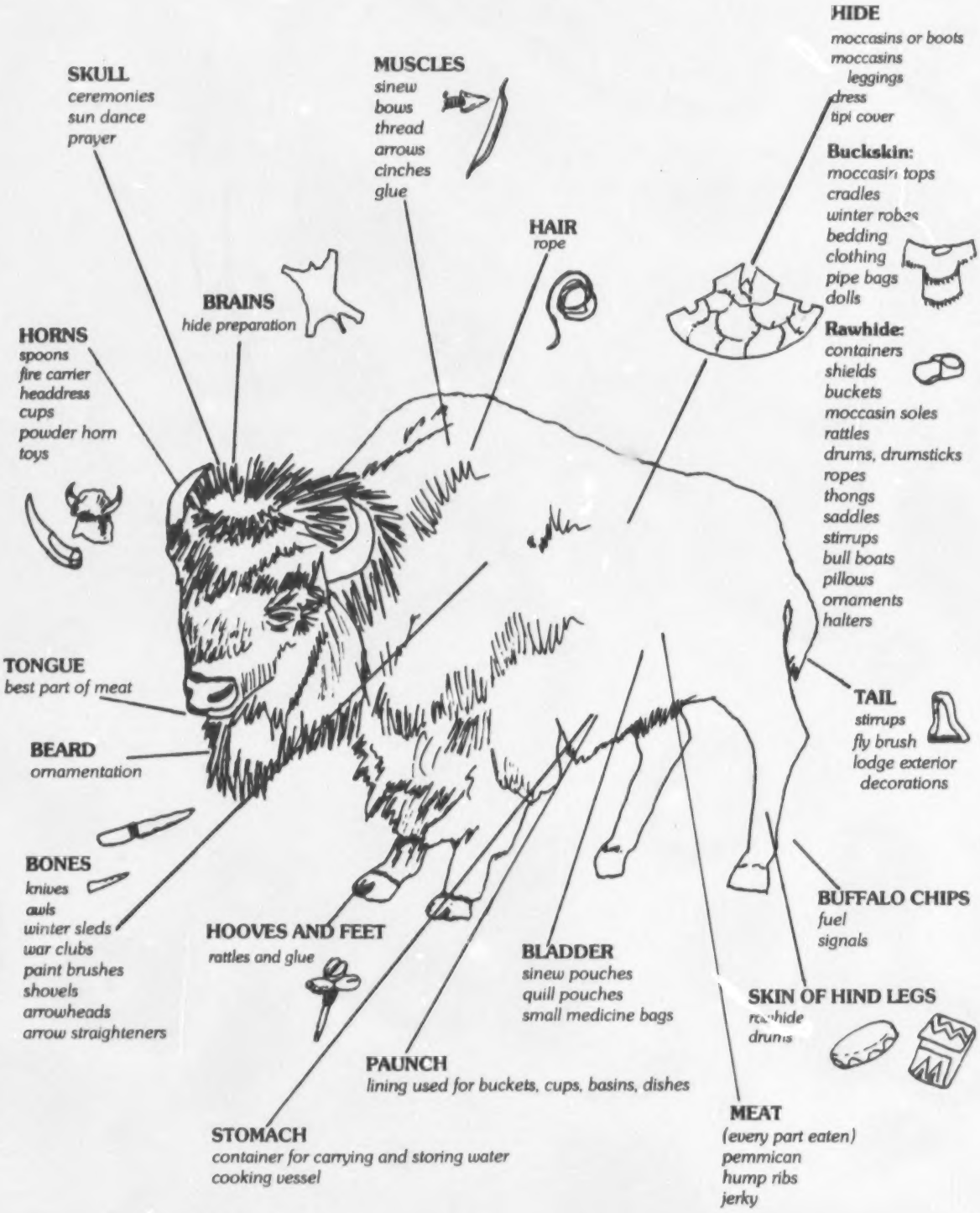
They gave us special ceremonies and prayers. They honored us by using every part of us, and wasting nothing. They kept our skulls, and carry them even today in memory of our past together. They burned the fields so we would have plenty of grass to eat. They thinned our herds, and the buffalo who lived had enough food to be strong and healthy.

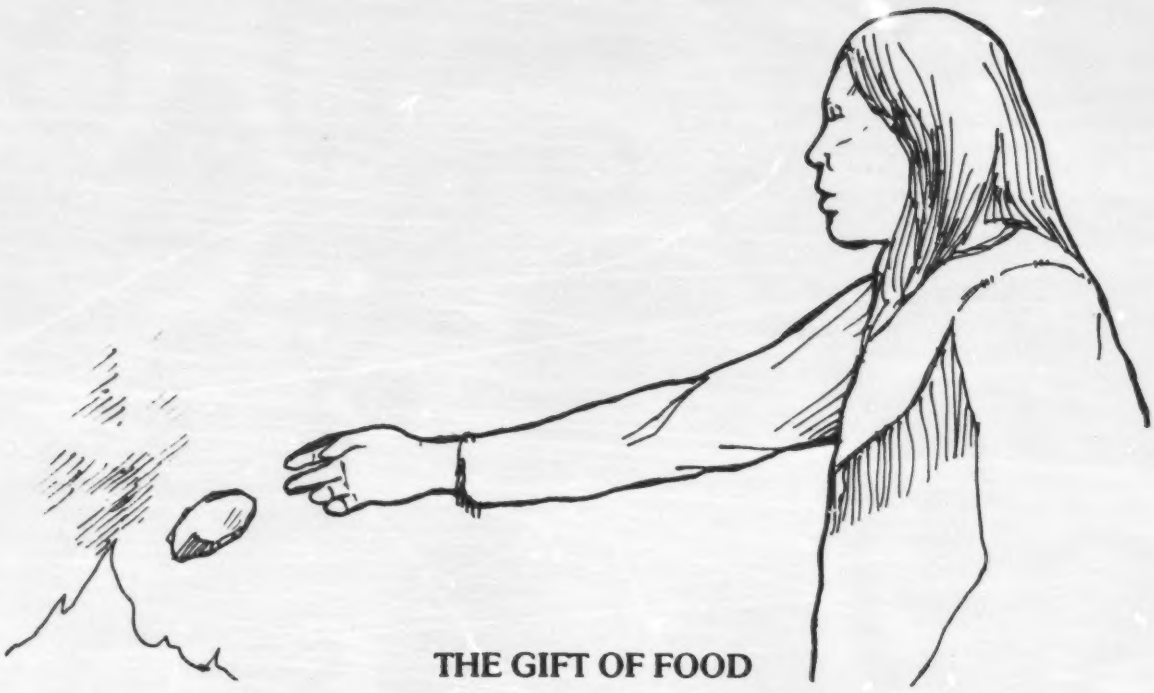
They also received our greatest gift to them with prayer and thanksgiving. The White Buffalo Calf Woman was the messenger to the people. She gave them the sacred pipe. (If you would like to know this whole beautiful story, an account is in *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux*, recorded and edited by Joseph Epes Brown.)

The Lakota respected all things and knew that we were all relatives. (Indian people today still know this is true.) They never took our lives without a purpose. We were aware of this, and knew it was important for us to give our lives so that the people might live.

We knew that when the people (and all living things) died, and their bodies went back into Mother Earth, the cycle would continue. Their bodies would become a part of the earth and would give food to all the growing things. In the springtime, tiny green shoots of grass would grow from Mother Earth to feed us . . . as we had fed them . . . and this great sharing would continue . . . within the circle of life.

USES OF THE BUFFALO





THE GIFT OF FOOD

All things in the universe are gifts of the Great Spirit. Life itself is a gift. To stay alive, it is necessary to eat. One always gives thanks, perhaps quietly or silently, but always. Someone might say, "Grandfather, **Tunkashila** (Tōon ká shēe lä), people of time, I give this to you," as a piece of meat is thrown into the fire as an offering. The important thing is always to give recognition and thanks to Mother Nature and the Great Spirit who created us all.

There was usually something good and tasty cooking in camp. The people prepared for long hard winters by gathering and preserving timpsila, plums, choke cherries, berries and other fruits, and by jerking buffalo and deer meat. Often times they traded for corn. By careful planning, they had all the food they needed to keep them healthy all through the year.

Here is a recipe for a favorite stew, **Washtunkala** (wäsh tōón ká lä). This recipe is simple and tasty. In the old days, it would have been cooked in a buffalo's stomach (paunch) with hot cooking stones. Then, after the stew was eaten, the "cooking pot" itself would be a meal. You could make this same stew today in a modern kitchen, or over a campfire.

Ingredients:

wild rice
timpsila (wild turnips)
meat
dried corn
water

Directions:

(1) Cook wild rice in water.
(2) Then add timpsila (if you don't have these, you could use potatoes or turnips).
(3) Add meat and cook until done.
(4) Then add corn (which has already been cooked and dried) and simmer.
(If you don't have this, you could use corn scraped off the cob, or canned corn.)

Here are a few recipes for other foods you might like to eat while we're visiting on the plains:

FRY BREAD

(Makes 3 flat, round loaves, about 10" in diameter, ½" thick)

5 cups flour
2 tablespoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon melted butter or margarine
2 cups milk
lard for frying the bread

1. Sift 4 cups of the flour with the baking powder and salt.
2. Combine milk and melted margarine or butter.
3. Place flour-baking powder mixture in a large bowl, and add the liquid ingredients, a little at a time, beating them in at first with an egg beater.
4. When the 4 cups have been worked into a soft dough with the milk, lightly flour a board with part of the remaining 1 cup of flour. Turn the dough out onto the board, and knead lightly, working in the rest of the flour.
5. Divide the dough into three parts, and shape each into a round pone about ⅛" thick and a diameter to fit the skillet to measure about ¼" deep.
6. Heat the lard and brown the breads quickly, one at a time, until golden on both sides.
7. Spread with any meat mixture or jam or stewed dry fruits. Cut into wedges and serve at once.

POPPED CORN

Ripe kernels were toasted in pottery on the hot stones of a fire and stirred until they popped. They were eaten while hot with salt.

CHERRY WASNA

1 lb. dried choke cherries
1 cup tallow or shortening
1 cup sugar

Grind up wild choke cherries. Add tallow or shortening; then add the sugar. Form into balls the size of a golf ball. This was always a treat for the Sioux children. With the above instructions for preparation you may substitute pounded dried beef or venison in place of the choke cherries.

CORN WASNA

5 cups parched corn (use white flour corn)
3 cups sugar
2 cups tallow or shortening

Grind the corn well. Place in a large mixing bowl. Add the other ingredients, mix well and place the wasna in an oblong pan to serve.

CHERRY WOJAPI

(any fruit may be used)
6 patties of dried cherries (soak cherries for 1 hour until soft)
1 cup sugar
½ cup flour
bits of tallow for flavoring

Boil the cherry patties in water for 2 hours. Drain the liquid and use for the sauce. Mix the white sauce and gradually add to the cherry liquid. Stir carefully. Add the tallow and sugar. Stir well until thick consistency; then it is ready to serve.

—*Indian Recipes*, United Tribes Educational Technical Center, Bismark, N.D.

Anytime you go to a gathering, you always remember the ones you left at home. It was, and is, the custom after Indian meals, to take a **watecha** (wa tĕ chá) home with you when you go. A watecha is a bundle of food from a feast. All the people share whatever food there is. You put your favorite foods in the watecha. Sharing is important because Indians are a people who are born to serve one another. All the people share happily in the gifts received from the Great Spirit.

YOUR TRAIL LANGUAGE STORY:

Throughout time, people have always wanted to remember special experiences. One way of remembering is to record your experiences with symbols, like the Lakota people of long ago. By using the trail language symbols from page 26 and the color and design symbolism from pages 24 and 25, you can "write" your own story — perhaps of our journey together through this book. You can also create your own symbols. The important thing is that the symbol reminds you of your feelings and experiences. I hope our travels together have left you with many happy thoughts. I am glad to have shared my path with you.

Happy Trails!

Tatanka Cincala

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Videotapes:

Images of Indians, Five half-hour videotapes. Produced by United Indians of All Tribes Foundation and KCTS/9, Seattle. Available through Cinema Associates, Box 9237, Seattle, Washington 98109. (206) 622-7378.

If you enjoyed this book, you'll want to read other books published by the Daybreak Star Press.

The Mamook Book
Sharing Our Worlds
Tawana Games
Ways of the Lushootseed People
Suquamish Today
Fisherman on the Puyallup

As Indian people travel through life, their paths lead them to many wonderful people, places and things. It is common for an Indian to treasure a small rock, or leaf or blade of grass that reminds him of a certain experience or place. Perhaps, in our travels together through this book, you have found something you would wish to keep in a special place. As our paths continue, I want to leave something else with you — a parfleche for your special things.

The parfleche is an oblong rawhide container that is folded and used as a suitcase, saddlebag or trunk by Indian people. The sides are folded to the center and tied with leather strips. The ends are folded and tied the same way. Parfleches were strong and durable, and were used as storage containers for food, clothing, feathers,and numerous other articles. The two "flaps" of the parfleche were decorated with identical painted geometric designs.

Parfleche Directions:

(1) Color or paint parfleche designs.

(2) Cut out parfleche on solid line.

(3) Fold along dotted lines marked B.

(4) Fold along dotted lines marked C.

(5) Lace with leather strip, string or yarn the two holes marked A and tie them in a bow.

(6) Lace down through the two holes marked #1.
Lace up through hole #3 and tie in a bow.

(7) Lace down through two holes #2.
Lace up through hole #4 and tie in a bow.

Now the book is done. But life is forever. I hope you have enjoyed learning and doing these activities. My wish for you is that in these pages, and in this time, you have found something you wish to keep in your heart.

Hecetu yelo. (hé chä tóo yě ló)
It is finished.
In beauty it is finished.
In power it is finished.
Pila miya, (pēē lá mī yä́)
(Thank you . . . you've done a great thing for me.)

PARFLECHE